C!N
964
HATTER M
THE LOOKING GLASS WARS

Think you know the whole story of *Lewis Carroll's* ***Alice in Wonderland?*** Have you dismissed it as nothing more than a colorful, albeit somewhat surreal, children's adventure?

Frank Beddor is eager to disabuse you of that notion.

Beddor, the producer of the comedic farce ***There's Something About Mary,*** is also the author of the critically acclaimed ***Looking Glass Wars*** (not yet available in novel form in the US, but released to great success in the UK and elsewhere), which reveals the "real" story of Alice and the Looking Glass. And later this month, Beddor is offering comics readers new insights into the world of ***The Looking Glass Wars*** with his limited series ***The Looking Glass Wars: Hatter M.***

This isn't an adaptation of Beddor's novel; instead, ***Hatter M*** is an original tale that bridges the gap between the first and as-yet-unreleased second book of the ***Looking Glass Wars*** trilogy—and it's a tale that Desperado publisher *Joe Pruett* is thrilled to bring to comic shops.

"This story has incredible potential," Pruett said. "It's a dark fantasy that's going to appeal to all sorts of readers, and as soon as I saw it, I knew it was something I wanted to publish." ***The Looking Glass Wars*** is the second sophisticated all-ages fantasy to appear under the Desperado imprint, following *J.M. DeMatteis & Mike Ploog's* acclaimed ***Stardust Kid.***

The Looking Glass Wars unites *Frank Beddor* with co-writer *Liz Cavalier* and artist *Ben Templesmith* for an adventure that takes readers deeper into the world of ***Hatter M,*** previewing some of the characters and plot points of the next novel. Beddor explained how the series fits in with his larger ***Looking Glass Wars*** saga.

"The comic book mini-series ***(Geo-Graphic Novel Volume 1) Hatter M*** tells the parallel story of Alyss's thirteen-year exile through the travels of her Royal Bodyguard, Hatter Madigan, as he crisscrosses the globe in a desperate non-stop search to find the lost princess after they are separated in the Pool of Tears while escaping a bloody coup in Wonderland," Beddor said.

tinually find himself facing off against those who wish to either suppress Wonderland's gift or channel the flipside of Dark Imagination for their own diabolical use."

What led Beddor to make the leap from film production to novel and comics writing? "On a personal level, I was fortunate that I produced such a successful movie that I had some financial freedom. Separate from the financial freedom, I felt a little empty being a facilitator to the creators. I wanted to be a *creator*. I loved the juice of having a big movie and everybody laughing, everybody recognizing it—but at the end of the day, being the *creator* is the ultimate wish fulfillment.

"In a way, I kind of dropped out. Most people would have cashed out and done a whole series of comedies. I was offered a lot of comedies, none of them at the level of ***There's Something About Mary....*** While this was all sort of swirling around, I made this discovery of this story, of ***The Looking Glass Wars*** saga and I started to feel my inspiration. It started to become dream-like. Eventually I just dedicated myself to becoming a creator and not a facilitator."

The Looking Glass Wars found an eager audience of UK readers interested in Beddor's innovative take on the Wonderland milieu. "It was especially gratifying to be nominated for a few awards, Leicester's Book of the Year Award, Carnegie Medal and Staffordshire Young Teenage Fiction Award. The book will not be available here in the US until September 2006—of course I'm hoping for *another* pleasant surprise."

Desperado's Hat Trick

"For those unfamiliar with the first book of ***The Looking Glass Wars*** trilogy, the bigger story reveals the *true* history of Wonderland, based upon a stunning discovery which unmasked the ultimate literary lie, a twisted fabrication that had existed for nearly 150 years. While universally accepted that Lewis Carroll was inspired to write his classic children's books to entertain seven-year-old Alice Liddell, it is far from true. Lewis Carroll did *not* tell Alice Liddell the story of Wonderland—*she* told *him*! Alice was *not* born into the Liddell family—she was adopted. Her true identity was Alyss Heart, the future Queen of Wonderland. Carroll had changed everything and everyone—including the identity of her royal bodyguard. Hatter M is *not* the story of a Mad Hatter. Hatter Madigan is an expert bladesman, a ranking High Cut of the Wonderland Millinery, and not the tea guzzling madman of children's lit...

"Hatter Madigan is absolutely unique—an incredibly complex, tortured, stubborn, emotional grown-up hero. The only visual connection to Carroll/Disney etc., is the iconic Hat. But in Hatter's M's case, the Hat is much more than some identifying headwear—it is his signature weapon. A career soldier and expert bladesman, Hatter is a ranking High Cut of the Wonderland Millinery. While formidable with blades, his true expertise is with the Hat. Woven and blocked from a material not available in any realm except the origins of wonder, the Hat was awarded to young Hatter upon his graduation from the Millinery. The Hat, when hurled by his expert hand, instantly unfolds into a circle of polished blades to attack or defend. Carnage accomplished, the blades retract and the Hat boomerangs back to its master.

"Coming from Wonderland, Hatter must learn to navigate our world. Since Wonderland's language consists of a system of energy and rhythm, Hatter faces no language barriers and is able to transmute and translate everything from Zulu to dolphin as he crisscrosses the globe in search of Alyss. But while he begins his search for the lost princess, he gradually comes to discover that his travels have a purpose above and beyond this initial motivation, and that purpose is to protect and serve Imagination. As revealed in ***The Looking Glass Wars,*** Wonderland's great gift to our world is imagination. As a traveler from the source of all wonder, Hatter will continually find himself facing off against those who wish to either suppress Wonderland's gift or channel the flipside of Dark Imagination for their own diabolical use."

Why develop Hatter M's story in comics form rather than in another novel? "***Hatter M*** the comic just seemed like a necessary, organic progression from all of the work I did with artists on ***The Looking Glass Wars***. In ***LGW Book 1,*** Hatter M was introduced but his story was only explored for about four chapters. There was so much more to tell about his mad search for Alyss that I realized he needed his own forum -- and comic books would allow this dark, compelling, more mature story to be told best. Hatter M is a classic, archetypal comic book hero with his angst, his loss, his barely suppressed rage as he searches the world.

"Also, by doing ***Hatter M*** as a comic book series I am able to connect to and expand upon the universe of ***The Looking Glass Wars*** as it was introduced in ***Book 1*** and as it will continue in ***Books 2*** and ***3***. So for those fans of the series in the UK and other countries who have read ***Book 1,*** the comic is a great way to deepen, enhance, and bridge the world.

"Of course, since ***LGW Book 1*** will not be available in the states until next year, Hatter M's adventures will be what introduces American readers to the ***LGW*** universe. It's a total reversal—but the bridge will be there for anyone wanting to experience more of the world."

Beddor came to comics relatively late in life. "I cannot say that I was a major fan of comic books growing up. But much in the same way as I re-discovered ***Alice in Wonderland,*** comics hooked me as an adult. Beginning with *Alan Moore's* ***The Watchmen*** and *Neil Gaiman's* ***Sandman*** series, I became enthusiastic about the visual worlds and storylines being offered. Collaborating with artists in such a graphic, expressive medium is a whole new world for me. Getting to meet the fans at the different comic cons has been fantastic. Their enthusiasm, knowledge and loyalty is amazing. I hope that ***Hatter M*** is something that they will feel deserves their attention."

Ben Templesmith was Beddor's first choice to illustrate ***Hatter M.*** "Initially I was attracted to Ben's use of color and how he conceptualized his characters. I'd liked what he had done in ***30 Days of Night*** and saw that he had the ability to do horror which occasionally pops up in Hatter's fantastical journey... Since working with him I have discovered his sense of humor and this is coming out more and more. It's not all shadows and solitude for Hatter – much of who and what he encounters is bizarre, twisted and funny. Ben's art nails it every time."

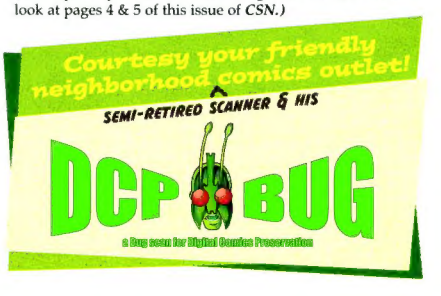
Hatter M is just the first of several comics projects Beddor has in the works. "We have two more comic book mini-series planned to complete our trilogy of 'Geo-Graphic' Novels. Rather than graphic novels we've been playing with the idea of calling them Geo-Graphic Novels since the adventures are broken up geographically and follow specific maps for each volume. The first volume tracks Hatter through Europe, the second follows Hatter's journey aboard the HMS Christina to South America... and the third volume will find Hatter in the Far East, where he reunites with a fellow Millinery Man."

Beddor thinks that readers will enjoy the blend of fantasy and historical drama that shapes this series. "Aside from ***Marvel 1602*** there are very few comics tackling the period piece—but what really makes ***Hatter M*** unique is his point-of-view of the period from 1859-1872. Seen through the eyes of a guilt ravaged Imagination warrior from another world, our own history takes on a completely new dimension."

Explore this new dimension for yourself later this month when ***Hatter M #1,*** a $3.99 comic from Desperado and Image, is slated for release.

by Alex Segura (with Cliff Biggers)

(For a special preview of ***The Looking Glass Wars,*** take a look at pages 4 & 5 of this issue of ***CSN.***)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a Bug team for Digital Comics Preservation

Joe Kubert: The Heart of Rock

By the time most people turn 79, they've long since left their careers behind. Not *Joe Kubert*, though—but perhaps that's because his career is also his art and his passion.

Kubert, a veteran with more than a half-century of comics credits to his name, recently released an original graphic novel, ***Jew Gangster—A Father's Admonition.*** That's just a start, however: Kubert is returning to the racks in early 2006 with his first limited series in many years—a ***Sgt. Rock*** series, ***The Prophecy,*** that he is both writing and drawing.

As Kubert told ***Comic Shop Newsarama's*** *Rik Offenberger*, he's not actually attracted to war comics as such, even though much of his most acclaimed work has been set against a backdrop of armed conflict. "It's not really of interest to me then any other subject matter that I take on, other then the fact that I am well acquainted with Sgt Rock and it's something I enjoy doing—but war is not a favorite subject of mine."

Rock, however—well, that's a different story. So what is it about the stalwart head of Easy Company that appeals to Kubert? "The longevity of the character itself and a kind of loyalty to the character. I do have a feeling that I can bring in an additional depth and a new angle to the character. That kind of interests me. It's a cliché to say it's a challenge but maybe to some degree it is."

Kubert gives much of the credit for Rock's success to the man with whom he worked on Easy Company for many years. "It more to the efforts of *Bob Kanigher* that anybody else. The fact is the way he wrote it and the way he imagined the characters, gave it credibility that most of the other war stories were missing. Bob's trust was to get this character as believable as possible. The other war stories were imminently forgettable simply because the characters didn't stand up. To a great extent he achieved it. I remember when he was editing he would get letters from guys in the Army really felt there *was* a Sgt Rock. That to me was a major, major compliment."

Part of Easy Company's appeal was the diversity of the book's cast—different races, different religious groups, different social

strata, each united in combat. How did that then-unique mix come about? "Again the credit for that should go to *Bob Kanigher*; he's the guy that created the characters. When *Brian Azzarello* did ***Sgt Rock: Between Hell and A Hard Place***, he did a terrific job on the script; he just extended what *Bob Kanigher* had done. That's what I am doing with ***Prophecy***."

Kubert is confident that it's the story, not the genre, that will sell ***Sgt. Rock: The Prophecy.*** "It's been proven over and over again in Westerns and superheroes, or any genre you can think of, that it's the combination of the quality of the story and the quality of the illustrations that really make it."

While the last ***Sgt. Rock*** tale was a graphic novel produced by Kubert with writer *Brian Azzarello* that was published under the Vertigo imprint, this series will appear from DC—home to Sgt. Rock's adventures from the late 1950's until the 1980's. Did the return to DC bring with it any restrictions on content? "I have no restrictions at all—in fact I know the people up there, *Karen Berger* and *Paul (Levitz)* and everybody else up there. They know me from way, way back and I am pretty much trusted in terms of the subject matter, and there is stuff I know that they know I wouldn't do."

As Kubert explained, ***Sgt. Rock: The Prophecy*** is inspired by a true story. although "the characters are totally different. The timing is completely different. Just prior to World War II, in 1940 or 41, they were trying to get a very Orthodox Rabbi, who was considered a leader among the Jewish people of Europe, out of Europe—and this story is based on that.

"The Rabbi himself was an older man. He was to get out and try to tell the world what was about to happen to the Jews in the Holocaust. The character I have is a younger man. It takes place in 1943, in the middle of the war, so that we can get Rock involved. He has to get this young man out of Europe. The general population thought he had the ability to prophesize what would happen. In 1943 not many people knew the actual circumstances about the concentration camps. People had heard stories but no one really knew. One of the reasons that very little was done to help or save these people was that no one knew. Rock's job was to get this young Rabbi out so that he could get his message across."

The members of Easy Company react to the Rabbi "in different ways. The ways each one of them reacts defines the characters. Wildman reacts kind of impatiently. Little Sure Shot relates a lot historically with what has happened to the Indians in America to what happens to the Jewish People. Each reacts in his own way."

While Kubert is doing the series solo, he has enlisted some assistance on the covers: his sons *Adam & Andy Kubert*, who recently signed exclusive contracts with DC, are working with him on the covers, and he couldn't be more proud. "My two boys teach here at the school [The Joe Kubert World of Cartooning, one of the most respected training grounds for up-and-coming illustrators] and they have the studio in the building as well and I see them virtually every day—sometimes *too* much," he joked. "To me it's just a miracle that they decided to do what they are doing. Not that I tried to push them into this; I couldn't even if I wanted. Amazingly enough at this stage of the game this was their choice and they are doing some of the best work of their careers. The fact that they were invited to do the alternate covers put the cherry on top of the sundae."

Sgt. Rock: The Prophecy #1 is scheduled for mid-January release.

War Machine

We often hear of military technology being adapted for civilian use—but what would happen if state-of-the-art experimental military technology fell into the hands of the wrong sort of civilians... the criminal sort? That's the focus of *Jordan Raskin & Andrew Lelling's* ***Industry of War,*** a graphic novel from Image and Desperado Publishing.

Industry of War follows two investigators who must track down experimental military tech that's fallen into the hands of a former gang member. "First up is Michael Landry; a rumpled, sloppy, but dedicated to his job kind of guy. Distrustful of his superiors' motivations, Landry tempers his choices in the field from a sense of honor and morality...

"Then there's his partner, James Vansanto—also dedicated, but an absolute 'letter of the rule book' kind of guy. He never questions orders and while he's torn between doing his duty vs. saving lives, he doesn't let morality get in the way of the job that needs to get done...

So what are the two agents looking for, exactly? "They're hunting down various missing biosymbiotic weapon suits called P.C.A's (Personal Combat Apparatus)," Raskin told ***Comic Shop Newsarama's*** *Chris Arrant*. "But the latest PCA model on their retrieval list will prove to be their most difficult when they discover it was programmed with an assassination mission during the first gulf war.. a mission it never got a chance to complete!

"Over the course of the story, they uncover the existence of the mission through their detective work in tracking it down to Eddie Vierra, a newly reformed New York City gang-banger. Eddie is just being released from prison wanting to leave his past behind him and live a normal life. But that's not going to happen because he's about to accidentally find that PCA, and after it attaches itself to him in a parasitic manner, its flawed design will drive him insane while filling him with the desire to complete that long awaited gulf war assassination mission.

"This particular PCA model is referred to as a 'Bodyblade' unit. Basically, it's an infantry combat harness (worn as a suit) which fuses itself with you when you put it on. But it can't simply be taken off like your jacket. Once it's on, it has to be surgically removed.

"If the weapon worked right it would be amazing and turn a single soldier into a one man army. But the design concepts for these weapons were more ambitious than current technology could handle and these things malfunction, *big time*! In general the onboard computer gets confused by the user's strong emotional issues and misinterprets them as combat orders."

Raskin drew his inspiration for ***Industry of War*** from a rather surprising source. "I was watching ***60 Minutes***. There was this fleecing of America style episode by *Mike Wallace*. He was reporting on the costly storage of surplus from wars long over. I'm talking like World War 2 era stuff (most of which was useless). They had tires, field rations, blankets, boots, you name it. I remembered thinking what else do they have stored that the public isn't aware of? And what if it was something really dangerous?... That was the moment ***Industry of War*** was born."

While the initial ***Industry of War*** is a 72-page original graphic novel by Raskin with co-writer *Andrew Lelling*, he's already looking at other formats for future volumes of the saga. "***Act 2*** is looking like it's going to divide up into two parts. It will *not* be another 72 pager—more likely two 30 pagers. ***Act 3*** is up in the air, but I imagine will be about 48 to 60 pages in length."

Industry of War is scheduled for early December release.

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Coming Comics
Marvel in February

Transformed by his experiences during "The Other" saga, Peter Parker stands poised for the next chapter of his life. And to mark the occasion, Tony has got a very special present: a new Spider-Man costume that's certain to raise eyebrows! See for yourself in ***Amazing Spider-Man #529*** by *J. Michael Straczynski & Ron Garney.*

At long last, ***Astonishing X-Men*** returns with its 13th issue—and its all-star creative team of *Joss Whedon & John Cassaday*—in February. Whedon & Cassaday have signed on for a six-part bimonthly run—and while Marvel's not giving any plot details, you can be *sure* it'll bea must-read.

Brian Bendis & Steve McNiven present the prologue to their next big story arc "The Collective" in ***New Avengers #16.*** After the horrifying events of ***House of M,*** the planet Earth has changed beyond description... and thus the Collective is born—and that means a brand new Marvel threat for the brand new Avengers. Plus, this issue guest stars Alpha Flight... in their final battle!

In ***Captain America #15,*** *Ed Brubaker & Mike Perkins* lay the groundwork for the next year of Cap stories in a standalone tale that reveals where Crossbones has been since he kidnapped the Red Skull's daughter six months ago.

Ed Brubaker & Michael Lark begin their creative run with ***Daredevil #82,*** launching a storyline that Daredevil fans will not be able to put down! For the past few years, Matt Murdock's life has been teetering on the edge of destruction. Now, pushed beyond the limit, Matt finds himself behind the eight ball with no clear way out, the people he calls friends slowly deserting him, and Hell's Kitchen slowly slipping out of control. The question is, when his back is against the wall, just how far will Daredevil go to get back what is his?

The Exiles World Tour continues in ***Exiles #77*** with a story that guest-stars the Squadron Supreme. That's right—*Tony Bedard & Jim Calafiore* send the Exiles to the Squadron Supreme universe for some major butt-kicking... and you can see it all here!

Franklin Richards returns in his second oneshot, courtesy of *Marc Sumerak & Chris Eliopoulos.* ***FF Presents: Franklin Richards, Son of a Genius—Everybody Loves Franklin.*** This charming all-ages book features two brand-new Franklin tales along with two previously published shorts.

Garth Ennis returns to Nick Fury with the six-part ***Fury: Peacemaker,*** illustrated by *Darick Robertson & Jimmy Palmiotti.* This story takes readers into Fury's past, revealing his first meeting with the the 21st Panzer Division and its skilled warrior commander -- General Stephen Barkhorn. It was there that he got a second chance at life...and revenge.

March brings the debut of Ms. Marvel's ongoing series courtesy of *Brian Reed & Rob DeLatorre*—but before that series launches, Marvel presents a new story by Reed & DeLatorre along with several reprint tales in ***Giant-Size Ms. Marvel #1.***

February's the month of love and romance—so what better time for Marvel to offer five love-centric oneshots published under the collective title of ***I (Heart) Marvel***? The books include ***Web of Romance,*** a lovely little piece by *Tom Beland & Cory Walker* that pits Spidey against the menacing Mandrill *and* the destructive Dragon Man while getting the one gift that will make marvelous Mary Jane's heart purr? *Fabian Nicieza & John Proctor* look at supervillain love in ***Outlaw Love,*** a tale starring Bullseye and Ruby Thursday. *CB Cebulski, Kei Kobayashi, & Tomoko Tamiguchi* offer a shojo tales of Scarlet Witch, Medusa, Black Widow, and Elektra in ***Marvel AI.*** In ***My Mutant Heart,*** various writer and artists present offbeat tales of mutant love. ***But He Said He Loved Me*** is perhaps the zaniest of all, however, as *Keith Giffen, John Lustic, Roger Langridge, & Jimmy Palmiotti* do some creative and irreverent rewriting of classic Marvel romance tales from the past.

Greg Pak & Carlo Pagulayan kick off "Planet Hulk" in ***Incredible Hulk #92.*** It's all in here. Savage alien planet. Oppressed barbarian tribes. Corrupt emperor. Deadly woman warrior. Gladiators and slaves. Battle axes and hand blasters. Monsters and heroes...And the Incredible Hulk! Let the smashing commence!

Marvel turns back the clock for ***Marvel Legacy: The 1960s Handbook.*** Just what *is* the 1960s Handbook, you ask? Imagine a Handbook written at 11:59 p.m. Dec. 31, 1969. The profiles within cover everything published by the hallowed House of Ideas up until that point. So if it's from a comic that has a December 1969 cover date or earlier, you'll find it in this magnificent mag! From the Acrobat to Zota -- with the Avengers, Captain America, Captain Marvel, Daredevil, Dr. Strange, the Fantastic Four, the Hulk, the Silver Surfer, Spider-Man, the Sub-Mariner, Thor and the X-Men as they were in the 1960s, as well as '60s-era characters such as Factor Three, the Beasts of Berlin, Chili, the Infant Terrible, Mogul of the Mystic Mountain, the Painter of 1000 Perils, the Living Brain, Patsy Walker, the Blackie Drago Vulture, the Ringo Kid and more!

Artist *Angel Medina* joins *Robert Aguirre-Sacasa* for ***Marvel Knights Spider-Man #23,*** the kickoff issue of the five-part "Feral" storyline. Strange changes are coming over Spidey's animalistic foes – including Dr. Curt Connors, John Jameson, and Felicia Hardy—awakening the beast that dwells within them all.

This month's ***Marvel Spotlight*** focuses on ***Astonishing X-Men*** writer *Joss Whedon* and ***Daredevil*** artist *Michael Lark.*

Robert Kirkman & Paco Medina reach into Marvel's future in ***Marvel Team-Up #17.*** In a world without heroes, Mutan 2099 struggles to save the innocent. Darkhawk, Sleepwalker, Terror Inc, Speedball, Gravity, Arana, X-23 and Dagger find themselves in the far future. Can they get back in time to save the world--and what role will this strange young mutant play?

The Punisher celebrates another holiday with a special oneshot. ***Punisher: Bloody Valentine,*** a 48-pager by *Jimmy Palmiotti, Justin Gray, & Paul Gulacy,* marks the return of the lovely and lethal assassin Suspiria... and it appears she wants to kiss and make up. You see, the murderous pair have got a mutual enemy -- an arch-villain whose pursuit will take them to Suspiria's home turf of Rome.

Saga of Squadron Supreme is a condensed retelling of the origins of the alternate-reality superteam, along with an in-depth analysis of everyone from Arcanna to Zarrda. This issue also features a preview of the upcoming ***Squadron Supreme #1.***

Hey there, buckaroos! Time to say "Howdy" to the newest member of She-Hulk's law firm, Matthew Hawk, the legendary Two-Gun Kid, who 's about to mosey into town in ***She-Hulk #5*** by *dan Slott & Juan Bobillo.* He's back in the present and barred from ever returning to his own time. So, can this lawyer from the Wild West find a place for himself in the courts of today? All that, and She-Hulk's got herself a new client—a former Avenger who's in a world of trouble...

Acclaimed novelist *Eric Jerome Dickey* makes his Marvel debut with ***Storm,*** a six-issue limited series illustrated by *David Yardin.* The story focuses on the untold love between Marvel's pre-eminent black heroes, Storm and the Black Panther. An orphaned street urchin, living by her wits on the unforgiving plains of Africa as she struggles to harness her slowly-developing mutant powers...A warrior Prince, embarking on his rite of passage as he ponders the great responsibility in his future...And a crew of ruthless mercenaries who'll stop at nothing to capture an elusive creature of legend -- the fabled wind-rider.

The struggle to save Earth ramps up in *Warren Ellis & Brandon Peterson's* ***Ultimate Extinction #2.*** In a last-ditch effort to save Earth from Gah Lak Tus, the X-Men's Charles Xavier attempts a massive, full-blown psychic attack on the unimaginable menace approaching our planet. Meanwhile, the mystery of Ultimate Silver Surfer deepens as he attempts to kill detective Misty Knight.

A time travel experiment could prove to be a major problem for Reed and the rest of the Fantastic Four. In ***Ultimate Fantastic Four #27*** by *Mark Millar & Greg Land,* a guilt-ridden Reed Richards attempts to undo his greatest failure by using time travel to fix the snag that caused the teleportation accident which resulted in Ben Grimm's becoming the Thing. If it works, Ben will be Ben and the Thing will never have existed. And neither will the FF...

Just when Spidey has things under control with Silver Sable, in flies a winged horror to make his Ultimate debut—the Vulture! And this is a Vulture more deadly than you can imagine, with weapons to make him a match for any super hero. See what happens next in ***Ultimate Spider-Man #90*** by *Brian Bendis & Mark Bagley.*

Career criminal Jackie Dio is fresh out of the Cage and looking for trouble. When he tracks down some of his old crime contacts, he discovers a lot has changed in the New York underworld—and finds more trouble than he bargained for. If he's going to have a shot at surviving, he may have to get acquainted with the shadowy figure known only as "The Consultant" – that is, if he even exists. Follow Jackie on his quest in ***Underworld*** by *Frank Tieri & Staz Johnson.*

Hugh Sterbakov, co-writer of the critically acclaimed ***Freshmen,*** joins *Sean Scoffield* for ***X-Men Unlimited #13,*** a Decimation tie-in featuring Mesmero!

When his people need him the most, he shall return! Lord Apocalypse resurfaces in ***X-Men #s 182 & 183*** to lead mutantkind into the future of the earth and only the strongest can survive! Plus, just wait until you see the new Horsemen that *Peter Milligan & Salvador Larroca* have come up with!

Frank Tieri & Clayton Henry present a team-up that you never expected: ***X-Men: Apocalypse/Dracula.*** One is a villain that has been plaguing civilization since the time of the Pharaohs. The other is the deadliest vampire to ever walk the earth. Enemies since the Crusades, they've met again in 19th century London... and that means four issues of Victorian mayhem.

Marvel collected editions for February include:

- ***Arana Vol 3: Night of the Hunter,*** a digest-sized volume reprinting ***Arana #s 7-12;***
- ***Avengers: Galactic Storm Volume 1,*** compiling a heaping helping of 1980s Marvel tales from ***Avengers*** and related titles;
- ***Essential Moon Knight Volume 1,*** a black-and-white compendium that includes early appearances of the Spirit of Khonshu from

Continued on page 6

The Looking Glass Wars

Hatter M

by Frank Beddor, Liz Cavalier, & Ben Templesmith

"Hatter M will track the hero's search for a lost princess as he circles the globe from 1859-1872 in a non-stop quest to save the future Queen of Wonderland and redeem himself. Hatter Madigan is wracked with guilt and shame over having lost Alyss in the Pool of Tears after her mother had elicited what amounted to a deathbed promise that he would keep her daughter safe and make certain that she someday return to Wonderland to rule. Heavy stuff for a Royal Bodyguard to feel he has failed at. But as in most quests, the end-point is not the entire point. As he travels, Hatter M will meet many of history's famous and infamous characters. He will influence historical battles, save lives and leave behind a legacy of service to Imagination."

—Frank Beddor

AN ARMORY.
A LOST PRINCESS FROM WONDERLAND?
I TRULY REGRET THAT I HAVE BEEN NO SUCH PERSON.
AND YOU HAVE RECEIVED NO DIRECTIVES FROM WONDERLAND INTENDED FOR ME?
WONDERLAND APPRECIATES YOUR VIGILANCE.
NOTHING YET. BUT I WILL BE QUICK TO LET YOU KNOW IF I DO.
A DUD.
BONJOUR, MONSIEUR. SERVICE SUR LE PÉLIX VOUZ AIDER?
BON. TOUT CELA SANS AU MOINS VOUZ TRAVELLATE... TRAVERSATE...
I TRAVEL FROM WONDERLAND WHERE I OVERSEE THE ARMORY. AND I AM THE ROYAL BODYGUARD FOR PRINCESS ALYSS HEART. SHE HAS LOST SOMEWHERE IN THIS WORLD AND I MUST LOCATE HER IMMEDIATELY.
HAVE YOU ANY WORD ON HER WHEREABOUTS?
SIR, YOU LOOK LIKE A MAN WHO WEARS A HAT WELL. PLEASE TAKE THIS AS A GIFT OF ENCOURAGEMENT IN YOUR QUEST.
THANK YOU, BUT NO. I HAVE A HAT. THERE CAN BE NO OTHER.
PERHAPS NOT. THIS HATMAKER IN THIS SHOP, BUT I AM CERTAIN THAT SOMEWHERE IN THIS WORLD I WILL FIND MY LINK TO WONDERLAND IN A HAT SHOP. FOR NO MATTER WHAT THE WORLD, MEN WHO DEAL IN HEADWEAR ARE MEN TO BE TRUSTED ABOVE ANY OTHERS.
WHY THE BIG DEAL?
LE MONSTRE KILLED FIVE MEN WITH THE THROW OF A SINGLE BLADE.

KRRRK
SNITCH

ALYSSIP
RECO'S SNEEZEWORT HAVE FOLLOWED FROM WONDERLAND!

RHIPP
RHIP
MY MISTAKE.
C'AAAHH! LE MONSTRE!

PARIS PRISON.
LOCK HIM IN TIGHT.
SLAM
DAMN HAT.

PALAIS DE JUSTICE.
THEY FOUND SH JOCKSTRA BUT ONLY 11 HEADS!
A RAMPAGE. TWENTY PEOPLE DEAD.
THE CHEESEMAKER'S SISTER-IN-LAW SAW HIM FLYING OVER LUXEMBOURG PARK!
I HEARD HE KILLED 100 MEN OVER AN INSULT!
TEN TIMES THAT NUMBER!

CHAINED BEAST!
HOW DARE YOU MAKE A MOCKERY OF THE COURT!
TO UNROLL THIS MAN IS TO INVITE GREAT DANGER. IT IS MY UNDERSTANDING THAT HE HAS OTHERWORLDLY ABILITIES.
THIS MAN MUST STAND TRIAL LIKE ANY OTHER. UNMASK HIM.
HE'S CUTE!
HE'S PROBABLY MEDICUR.

Werewolf by Night, Spectacular Spider-Man, Marvel Two-in-One, Marvel Team-Up Annual, Hulk Magazine, and the first twelve issues of ***Moon Knight;***

- ***Essential Peter Parker, the Spectacular Spider-Man Volume 2,*** a black and white phonebook-sized collection of ***Spectacular Spider-Man #s 32-53, Annuals 1 & 2,*** and ***Amazing Spider-Man Annual #13;***
- ***Exiles Vol 12: World Tour Book 1,*** collecting #s 69-74;
- ***House of M,*** a trade paperback compiling ***House of M #s 1-8*** and ***The Pulse Special;***
- ***House of M: Fantastic Four/Iron Man,*** compiling the two tie-in limited series;
- ***House of M: Incredible Hulk,*** collecting the five-parter from ***Hulk #s 83-87;***
- ***House of M: Mutopia X,*** collecting the five issue limited series;
- ***House of M: New X-Men,*** collecting ***Academy X #s 16-19*** and selections from ***Secrets of the House of M;***
- ***House of M: Spider-Man,*** collecting the five-part tie-in series;
- ***House of M: Uncanny X-Men,*** collecting ***Uncanny X-Men #s 462-465*** and selections from ***Secrets of the House of M;***
- ***House of M: World of M,*** collecting crossover tales from ***Wolverine, Black Panther, Captain America,*** and ***The Pulse;***
- ***Marvel Masterworks: Sgt. Fury Volume 1*** presents the last until-now-uncollected Marvel Silver Age series; this edition contains ***Sgt. Fury and His Howling Commandos #s 1-13*** by *Stan Lee, Jack Kirby, & Dick Ayers,* including an action-packed WWII tale guest-starring Captain America;
- ***Marvel Monsters,*** a hardcover compendium of the four offbeat oneshots from October, along with ***Marvel Monsters: From the Files of Ulysses Bloodstone;***
- ***Marvel Romance,*** a 176-page compendium of classic love stories from the 1960s & 1970s, featuring work by *Stan Lee, Dick Giordano, Jack Kirby, Gray Morrow,* and others;
- ***Nightcrawler: The Winding Way,*** collecting the final six issues of the series;
- ***Powers Volume 9: Psychotic,*** a trade paperback collecting the story arc that leads up to the 50th-issue celebratory special.
- ***Punisher Max Volume 2,*** a hardcover collecting ***Punisher #s 13-24;***
- ***Secret War,*** a hardcover reprinting the years-n-the-making series by *Brian Bendis & Gabrielle Dell'Otto;* along with ***From the Files of Nick Fury;*** and
- ***Ultimate X-Men Volume 13: Magnetic North,*** collecting ***Ultimate X-Men #s 61-65.***

Coming Comics Dark Horse in February

Aliens/Predator: Panel to Panel, is a hefty collection of some of the best work done for Dark Horse's ***Aliens*** and ***Predator*** franchises, including art by *John Bolton, Dave Dorman, Mark Schultz, Richard Corben, Mike Mignola, Doug Wheatley, Arthur Suydam, Mark A. Nelson, Alex Maleev, Den Beauvais, Glenn Fabry, Jon Foster, David Michael Beck, Sam Keith, Doug Mahnke,* and many, many more.

Dark Horse's Harlequin manga romance line continues with ***Harlequin Pink: Idol Dreams*** (an all-ages title) and ***Harlequin Violet: Holding On to Alex*** (a mature-readers title).

Award-winning ***Hellboy*** creator *Mike Mignola* teams with comics legend *Richard Corben* for ***Hellboy: Makoma, or A Tale Told by a Mummy in the New York City Explorers' Club on August 16, 1993.*** Set long before the life-changing events of this year's The Island, this two-parter reveals Hellboy's earlier encounter with the powerful mythology of Africa. Mignola writes and provides the cover, as well as drawing part of the story, with the lion's share drawn by Corben, in the collaboration which promises to be the horror-comics event of the year.

Ju-On: Video Side is *Miki Rinno's* manga adaptation of the Japanese horror movie that spawned an enormous franchise in Japan … and inspired a blockbuster Hollywood remake! This chilling tale of murder, secrets, and revenge centers on a home and the ugly events that transpired there. The place now has new owners, but there is a vile presence that permeates the building and pollutes every surface. What wickedness set off this unstoppable angry spirit? Why has its bloody grudge infected the home and its inhabitants? In the spirit of ***The Ring, Ju-On*** delivers a dark warning of a cursed spirit and the corrupting influence it has on the living.

Tony Takezaki is back with more good-girl SF whimsy in ***Space Pinchy: The Pinch of the Illegal Brain Intrusion.*** In space unfathomable, adventure awaits! Especially when you're the last of a lost tribe in search of relics. And super-especially if you're Pinchy Pink!

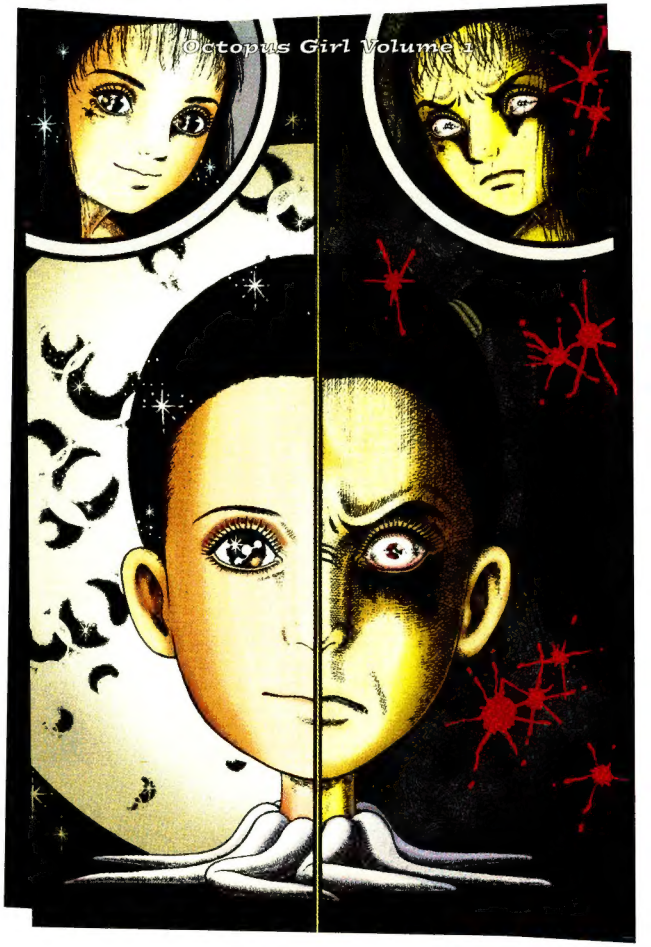
Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic/Rebellion 25¢ Flip Book is a primer for the first new series in Dark Horse's exciting relaunch of the Star Wars line. This flip book features two brand new stories (one on each side) and never-before-seen concept designs for both ***Rebellion*** and ***Knights of the Old Republic.***

Jamie Delano & David Lloyd invite readers to join them in ***The Territory,*** a full-color graphic novel. Mysteriously marooned in an unnamed ocean, a man named Ishmael is rescued by pirates and sold into slavery. His past is a blank. Equipped only with courage, a talent for action heroics and the inspiration of a half-remembered love, he must flirt with the sinister tentacles of Hydracorp to win his freedom. The Territory is a land of wonder and fear; hidden in its dark heart, a haunting truth that Ishmael is driven to discover. But there are no maps to The Territory. Those who would explore it must draw their own.

Enjoy the lush art of *Yoshitaka Amano* in an the upscale hardcover collection ***Yoshitaka Amano: Fairies,*** in which he turns his considerable talent to capturing in breathtaking images characters from such beloved stories as Shakespeare's ***A Midsummer Night's Dream,*** the wizard Merlin and his muse the intoxicating Nimue, mermaids of the deep as well as his interpretation of fairies from Celtic and Japanese mythology.

Dark Horse collected editions for February & March include:

- ***Chronicles of Conan Volume 10: When Giants Walk the Earth & Other Stories,*** collecting tales from marvel's ***Conan the Barbarian #s 72-77 & 79-81*** (no, they didn't skip an issue—#78 was a reprint);
- ***Concrete Volume 4: Killer Smile,*** collecting the limited series ***Killer Smile*** and the *Paul Chadwick* short stories "Under the Desert Stars," "Four-Wheeled Sleeping Pill," "King of the Early Evening," "Enough World," "Family Night," "American Christmas," and "100 Horrors";
- ***Crying Freeman Volume 1,*** re-presenting the noir crime drama by *Kazuo Koike & Ryoichi Ikegami;*
- ***Lady Snowblood Volume 3: Retribution Part 1,*** continuing the vengeful saga by *Kazuo Koike & Kazuo Kamimura;*
- ***Magnus, Robot Fighter 4000 AD Volume 3,*** an Archives-style hardcover collection of ***Magnus #s 15-21;***
- ***Octopus Girl Volume 1,*** a series of disturbing horror stories by *Toru Yamazaki;*
- ***Reiko the Zombie Shop Volume 2,*** continuing *Rei Mikamoto's* saga of the beautiful young necromancer Reiko;
- ***School Zone Volume 1,*** *Kanako Inuki's* tale of ordinary children who encounter the strange and terrifying at their very own school, and discover that many ghost stories, urban legends, and superstitions are truly and horribly real; and
- ***Star Wars: Clone Wars volume 8—The Last Siege, The Final Truth,*** reprinting stories from ***Star Wars: Republic #s 72-77.***



Coming Comics Image in February

Jimmie Robinson turns his attention to an egomaniacal super-villain in ***Bomb Queen,*** a four-part miniseries. For a decade, she has ruled the city, made the laws, and bent the people to her blood lust and sexual perversion. However, despite years of death, destruction and moral decay, the people of New Port City prefer Bomb Queen's methods. All hell breaks loose when a hero comes to town and turns Bomb Queen's world upside down.

In ***Looking Glass Wars #2*** by *Frank Beddor, Liz Cavalier, & Ben Templesmith,* Hatter M returns after a dangerous visit to Wonderland convinced Alyss remains lost somewhere in our world. Determined to find the lost princess, Hatter moves forward with his plan to track the Glow of Imagination, but quickly discovers he is not alone in his mad search...

Milo, a devil-may-care swordsman, follows his own selfish path. But at the crossroad between our world and the next, he is faced with a decision that could determine the fate of the world in ***The Portent,*** a new series by *Peter Bergting.*

Songs become comics in ***Put the Book Back on the Shelf,*** an anthology of stories inspired by the songs of Belle and Sebastian. This hefty volume features material by *Charles Brownstein, Dave Crosland, Jen de Guzman, Laurenn McCubbin, B. Clay Moore, Ande Parks, Jamie S. Rich, Rick Spears, Rob G, Andi Watson,* and many others, with the creators putting their own spins on a cross section of Belle and Sebastian's songs, crafting stories inspired by the band's music, drawn from the band's entire catalog.

ShadowHawk 10

A moment's hesitation for ShadowHawk, and someone close to Eddie is dead. Emotionally drained and physically broken, Eddie retreats into a chasm of depression and self-doubt. However, his successor as ShadowHawk takes the opposite path, eagerly cutting a significant swath through New York's criminal underground. But a shocking guest-star waits in the wings -- with the potential to ruin them both! Find out who it is in ***ShadowHawk #10*** by *Jim Valentino, Scott Wherle, & Ted Wing.*

When a submarine is mysteriously downed in the Persian Gulf, CIA tactician Douglas Griffin is reactivated into his former SEAL team to investigate. Simultaneously, a string of mystifying attacks pits the U.S. Navy against the underwater Kingdom of Atlantis in a full-blown war in ***SoCom: SEAL Team Seven,*** a grpahic novel by *M. Zachary Sherman & Robert DelaTorre.*

Image collected editions for February include:

- ***Rocketo Volume 1: The Journey to the Hidden Sea,*** collecting the first six issues of *Frank Espinosa's* acclaimed series;
- ***Kilroy Is Here,*** collecting powerful and moving tales by *Joe Pruett, Tim Bradstreet, Guy Burwell, Phil Hester, Michael Avon Oeming, Mike Perkins, Andrew Robinson,* and others;
- ***Mora Volume 1: All Beasts Will Show Their Teeth,*** collecting four issues by *Paul Harmon,* along with oodles of bonus material;
- ***Dawn Volume 2: Return of the Goddess,*** a new printing of *Joseph Michael Linsner's* popular saga;

- ***Second Chances: Desperado,*** a compilation of the first issues of ***The Atheist, Deadworld,*** and ***Common Foe;*** and
- ***Witchblade Volume 10: Witch Hunt,*** collecting ***Witchblade #s 80-85.***

Ins & Outs

In: A sequel to ***Avengers: Earth's Mightiest Heroes,*** which writer *Joe Casey* first mentioned in an interview on avengersforever.org. The followup will be eight-issue limited series illustrated by *Will Rosado* and veteran ***Avengers*** inker *Tom Palmer.* Though a sequel, the series does not pick up directly after the first series ended (the introduction of Captain America's new team of Avengers, including Hawkeye, Quicksilver and Scarlet Witch), but instead picks up right after the events of ***Avengers #58,*** when the Vision was added to the team roster, and takes readers "through, in, out and around issues #59-60." Casey said that focusing on this period will allow him to explore the "deeper issues I wanted to deal with involving the Avengers and what the team means to its individual members... So much stuff happened in that brief stretch of issues, in what now seems like such a compressed manner, I realized there'd be plenty of material to mine… events that could've, should've or would've happened in that specific time."

Out: ***Red Sonja: One More Day,*** the first Sonja oneshot from Dynamite Entertainment, sold out of its printrun in a matter of days, in spite of a hefty overprinting on the book. "We'll take a look at the marketplace and see what the thoughts are about a second printing," Dynamite's *J. Allen* said.

In: A third printing for *Alex Ross, Jim Krueger, & Doug Braithwaite's* ***Justice #1,*** the kickoff issue of the stunning twelve-part Justice League series featuring Ross's paintings over Braithwaite's pencils. Ross is supplying another new image for the cover of this printing—and that means another must-have comic for Ross's many fans!

Out: Marvel's ***New X-Men #20*** has sold out of its first printing and its variant cover; the book will return to comic shops in mid-December in a second printing featuring a new cover image.

In: *Harvey Pekar,* who has an ***American Splendor*** miniseries in the works for DC's Vertigo imprint. This series follows Pekar's acclaimed graphic novel ***The Quitter,*** also published by Vertigo. The new miniseries will be Pekar's traditional ***American Splendor*** fare, autobiographical, slice of life stories illustrated by different artists, including ***Quitter*** illustrator *Dean Haspiel.* "Most of the stories I've done haven't been novel length, and I've grown accustomed to primarily writing shorter pieces, and that's still true to this day," Pekar said. "But the movie came up, and a lot of other things came up, and I made some deals to write graphic novels. As I was writing the longer stories, I was writing the short pieces too, and they were piling up. I wanted an outlet for them, and wanted to get back to publishing that type of stuff.

"I was talking with Dean about it and he said he'd mention it to DC, and it seems that they were favorably disposed to it..." The miniseries is slated to run as four 32-page issues, each with four stories running 20 pages, 8 pages, 2 pages and 2 pages, respectively.

Who's Zoomin' Who?

Zoom Suit, currently accessible to fans as an animated film, is about to make the jump to print. This April, Superverse will launch the ***Zoom Suit*** miniseries, produced by *John Taddeo & Billy Dallas Patton* with covers by Patton, *Billy Tucci, & Bob Layton.* Future variant covers will feature work by such comics greats as *Gene Colan, Jim Starlin, & Bart Sears.*

The story begins as an alien craft crash lands in Roswell, New Mexico, and the reports are heard around the world. Fast forward sixty years. The suit is stolen by turncoat NSA Agent Simon Bane. In a theft attempt reminiscent of DB Cooper, Simon leaps from an Army chopper at 8,000 feet and begins to don the Zoom Suit. However, he has made a deadly error: Aliens are small! The suit doesn't fit! Simon and the suit fall helplessly to earth at terminal velocity. On Earth, thirteen year old Myles Mason is bummed about not being able to afford a Halloween costume, when suddenly, from the sky, alien armor crashes to Earth just a few feet behind him.

Zoom Suit is an all-ages book with a retro-comics sensibility. In addition to the full-length story, the first issue also includes two full letters pages and ads parodying "old skool" ads seen in Marvel and DC comics for X-Ray specs, giant monsters, etc. The issue also contains many pop culture references and inside jokes as well as a secret code hidden throughout that will take fans on a mission outside the book, across the internet and into the middle of an alien conspiracy. Those who can decipher the code and solve the mystery will receive prizes such as DVDs and limited edition comics and trading cards.

"As a 30 year fan of comics, I can remember the days when comics didn't take themselves so seriously," said Taddeo. "That's what we're hoping to achieve with ***Zoom Suit***. Plenty of superhero action, but still a fun read, sprinkled with loads of pop culture and inside jokes."

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